IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 2-3 and 14, and amend claim 1 pending herein as follows:[1]

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1. (Twice Amended) A method of treating pulp comprising a pulp digestion process which includes supplying wood material into a digester (2), and a brown stock washing process which includes discharging brown stock from the digester to a brown stock washer (8) to obtain washed pulp, and treating the washed pulp in an oxygen delignification stage (10) and in a washer (12) of the oxygen delignification stage whereby the pulp digestion and washing processes mainly employ counter-current washing in which clean wash liquid is brought to the end of the process and filtrate of the process is transferred counter-currently relative to the flow direction of the pulp through several washing stages at least partly to the digester (2) and from there further to chemical recovery CR, and wherein the method further comprises lowering the COD-level in the oxygen delignification stage (10) according to the following steps:

a) between the digester and a process stage immediately following the oxygen delignification stage (10) and the washer (12) of the delignification stage in the flow direction of the pulp, separating a portion LI from the wash liquid/filtrate to be recycled counter-currently relative to the flow direction of the pulp;

b) treating the portion LI of the filtrate in a separation device (114, 214, 314, 414, 514) in order to produce two fractions CC and CD having a concentration difference in the liquid phase measured by a difference in at least one of dry solids, COD, and alkali;

c) returning the fraction CC having a lower concentration either substantially to the same point in the process from which the portion LI of the filtrate was extracted according to step (a), or to some other point in the process in order to lower the COD-level in the oxygen delignification stage;

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[1] Pursuant to Rule 121(c), a marked-up version of the amended claims appears in Appendix I hereto and shows all changes by underlining added language and bracketing deleted language.